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# Mayor's Office on Disability

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## Service and Support Animals A Brief Overview

Individuals with disabilities that use **service AND / OR support animals** are allowed equal access to all City-sponsored programs, facilities, services, and activities.

### ***What is a service animal?***

The ADA defines a service animal as any dog or in some cases, a miniature horse that is individually trained to work specifically for a person with a physical, sensory, psychiatric, or other disability.

### ***What is a Support Animal?***

Support animals are animals of any species that are not trained to perform a specific task, but their presence provides assistance to people with psychological disabilities. They help by reducing symptoms of depression, anxiety, stress, and difficulties regarding social interactions.

### ***Do I need a service tag for my animal?***

There is no legal requirement for you to carry a service tag for your animal. Some people find it easier to access buildings and services by having a California assistance tag from Animal

Care and Control which is only available for service/support dogs. You may, however, be asked two questions when in public:

- *Is this animal required because of a disability?*
- *How does it assist you?*

***What are my responsibilities for my service or support animal?***

- Service and support animals must be focused on assisting the individual and **not be disruptive or a threat to the public's health and safety**. This means that you must make sure that if you have a dog it is current on its vaccinations and you maintain a current rabies tag.
- Your service and support animal must be under your control at all times and maintain socially appropriate behavior. Please refer to the attached Service and Support Animal Behavior Guidelines.

***Am I allowed to keep my service/support animal at home even if it is a “no pets” building?***

- Yes, you are! The Fair Housing Act allows you to have your animal at home as a “**reasonable accommodation**” for your disability.
- You must inform your landlord about your request and you may be asked to submit a letter from a medical professional verifying that you have a disability.

- Your landlord may also ask you to provide proof of current vaccinations for your animal and sign an agreement about assuming full responsibility for its behavior in the building.

### ***Where am I allowed to bring my service / support animal?***

- **Service animals ONLY** as defined under federal law are allowed in any public and private establishment.
- All service **AND** support animals are welcomed at any building, program, or agency of the City and County of San Francisco and its contractors.
- When it comes to private businesses or establishments that sell or prepare food, the state law is unclear; you may be denied access if you have a support animal.

### ***Who can I contact if I am denied access with my service/support animal?***

- If you are denied access at a City building, facility or program, please contact us by calling (415) 554-6789 or email at [MOD@sfgov.org](mailto:MOD@sfgov.org)
- If you experience discrimination at a private business or restaurant, please contact the **Human Rights Commission** at **(415) 252-2500** or the **California Department of Fair Employment and Housing** at **(800) 884-1684**.